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Federal hardrock mining policies of growing importance to Montanans, UM researcher says

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October 20, 1989

**FEDERAL HARDROCK MINING POLICIES
OF GROWING IMPORTANCE TO MONTANANS, UM RESEARCHER SAYS**

MISSOULA --

Because of the recent resurgence in mining activity in Montana, changes in federal policy regarding hardrock mining in national forests are of growing importance to Montanans, according to an article in the fall issue of the Montana Business Quarterly.

The magazine is published by the University of Montana Bureau of Business and Economic Research.

In his article "Federal Regulation of Hardrock Mining in the National Forests," BBER Director of Economic Analysis Larry Swanson chronicles federal legislation enacted over the past 100 years governing the exploration for and mining of minerals on public lands.

He says that during that time, a gradual change has occurred in federal policy regarding public land management, including regulation of hardrock mining in national forests. "These changes have coincided with growing public concern for the environmental consequences of industrial activity and large-scale, natural resource development," he says.

For many years, the government has encouraged private exploration and development of hardrock minerals such as gold, silver, copper, lead and zinc on public lands, he says.

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"However, over the years, a general policy of disposing of public land to spur territorial settlement of a sparsely populated continent has given way to a policy of retaining public land and managing it for an increasingly urbanized population," Swanson says.

The fall issue of the Montana Business is available for \$4 at the UM Bureau of Business and Economic Research, Missoula, MT 59812; 243-5113.

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